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**NEWS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FRESNO WOMAN SENTENCED TO 12 MONTHS IN CUSTODY FOR STEALING  
APPROXIMATELY \$360,000 IN FEDERAL RETIREMENT BENEFITS**

***Benefits Belonged To Defendant's Deceased Father***

FRESNO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that PATRICIA JEANNE DUNNE, age 58, of Fresno, California was sentenced today by United States District Judge Oliver W. Wanger to imprisonment for 12 months and one day. In addition, she was ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$359,955.59. On January 9, 2006, the defendant pleaded guilty to mail fraud, and aiding and abetting involving a retirement benefits fraud scheme that dated back to 1985 before Judge Wanger.

This case is the product of an extensive, joint investigation by the U.S. Social Security Administration, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations, and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Sherrill A. Carvalho, who prosecuted the case, the defendant defrauded the Social Security Administration and Defense Finance and Accounting Service by allowing federal retirement benefits intended for her father to continue to be deposited into a joint bank account she had with him, following his death in 1985. In addition, DUNNE admitted to lying in a letter she mailed to the Social Security Administration in 2002 in which she claimed to be her father in an attempt to continue to have benefits deposited into a joint account. She admitted that she stole approximately \$125,922.20 in Social Security retirement benefits and approximately \$234,033.39 in U.S. Navy military retirement payments for a total theft in the amount of approximately \$359,955.59.

In sentencing the defendant, Judge Wanger said that in 15 years on the federal bench, he had never seen such a "lengthy purposeful and wrong course of conduct. He also noted that this was a "serious and exceedingly dishonest offense – stealing from the government money that was intended for someone no longer alive."

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